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## ALICE, THE FISHER GIRL: —OR— THE OLD MAN OF THE WRECK. A Story of Old England and the Ocean.

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[CONTINUED.]

### CHAPTER X.

THE STORM WITHOUT, AND THE STORM WITHIN.



ings. A servant came and lighted the lamp that hung in the hall, and when he was gone the earl began to realize that a terrible storm was brewing without. Yet he gave himself up to his own reflections awhile longer.

At length great drops of rain began to patter upon the window-panes, and the dry leaves and dirt came crashing against the glass as though they would break it. Louder and louder howled the blast, and the rain came down thicker and faster. The earl went to the window and looked out, but he might as well have looked into the depths of a boisterous sea, for all without was as black as the utter night of chaos. While he stood there by the window trying to peer into the utter blackness, he felt a touch upon his arm, and on turning he beheld his son.

"Isn't this terrible, father?" the young man uttered, with a look of earnest interest.

But the earl made no reply. He had forgotten the storm without, for there was tumult in his own bosom. He gazed into the face of his son, and his lips were compressed, and his brow contracted. Albion noticed the look in an instant, and with considerable anxiety, he asked:

"What is the matter, my father?"

"I'll tell you," the earl said, in short, whispered tones. "How have you conducted your self since you have been here?"

"Conducted myself?" repeated the youth, in surprise.

"Yes, how have you conducted yourself?"

"Look ye, father," returned Albion, after a few moments of thought. "To-day you spoke to me in the presence of others in a manner which I could not understand, and then I would not ask an explanation. Now you repeat the strangeness. What does it mean? Has Belinda Warner anything to do with it?"

"She has."

"Then may I ask an explanation?"

The earl had the first words of a hasty answer upon his lips, but he kept them back, and after a few moments' reflection he said:

"I allude to your treatment of Miss Warner."

"Go on, father," calmly and firmly resumed the youth. "I wish to know the whole case."

"You do not know it now!"

"Not at all. When I know what you mean, then I will give you such explanation as I can."

"You shall know what I mean, sir. Did you not, during the first part of your journey here, give Belinda Warner reason to believe that you loved her?"

For an instant Albion was fairly paralyzed with astonishment.

"Give—Belinda Warner—reason to believe—that I loved—her?" he at length repeated, in slow, measured accents, and dwelling distinctly upon each separate word. "My heavens, sir, what do you mean?"

"I mean just what I say," returned the earl; but he spoke more calmly, for his son's manner moved him some.

"My father, I yet can scarcely make out what you mean. But to your question I distinctly answer, no! Why, sir, from the very moment I set my eyes upon that girl I disliked her, and from the time I first passed an hour in her society I have utterly loathed and despised her."

"And suppose I were to tell you that she was

to become your wife?" The earl spoke quickly, but with much meaning.

"The matter has become a serious one, and I would not just upon it," returned Albion.

"But I am not jesting."

"Not jesting? Then what can you mean?"

"I mean that I had planned for Miss Warner to become your wife."

"Really? In earnest?"

"Most assuredly so."

"Father," said the youth, folding his hands together, and speaking with that peculiar calmness which marks the noble mind when a resolution is taken which even the presence of death could not shake, "if you mean this as a simple question, and yet mean it earnestly, I will give you an earnest answer: Before I would marry with that girl I would join the hosts of the field—get down upon my knees—strip off my outward signs of manhood, and crawl in the dust for life. Not even to save life itself would I do that thing."

"But I may command it."

"No, my father, you will not command it."

"But I am your father."

"Ay, so you are; and you have given to your son some of the nobleness of soul that belongs to your blood. You could not have given birth to the blood of a craven, or a slave!"

The earl looked into the face of his boy, and his heart was touched. There was nothing defiant in the words he had heard, but they had been spoken gently and with respect.

"Father," continued Albion, "will you answer me one question? Did you ever mean that I should marry with Miss Warner?"

"I did mean it, and it was for that very thing that I left you here."

At that moment there came a flood of blinding light upon the earth, and on the next instant came a crash as though the very firmament were rent into atoms. Both the father and son started; but as soon as the thunder crash had passed, and the shock had ceased, Albion spoke:

"But you said nothing of this to me?"

"Because I feared you would naturally rebel if you knew my plan. But Miss Warner is of a noble stock, she is very wealthy, and she is virtuous and honorable. I had meant that she should be your wife."

"Father," resumed the youth, laying his hand upon his parent's arm, "I will speak now plainly. From the first moment on which I became acquainted with Miss Warner, her conduct has been such as to literally disgust me. The first and only evening I ever passed alone in her company—and then Sir William and his son were both absent, so I was obliged to do it—she was disgusting in the extreme. She showed herself ignorant and bigoted, and betrayed feelings not worthy of even a first-water popinjay. On the very next morning, I caught her in the very act of throwing a power vessel at the head of one of her servants. I have hardly spoken to her since, though she has taken occasion to force herself in my way whenever she could. Lord Tiverton, compare that girl with my mother!"

The earl started as he heard these last words. Instinctively did his mind turn to that gentle, loving being whom he called—*his*—and he remembered how much of life's joy and peace he owed to her. Albion saw the effect he had produced, and he followed it up.

"Just look upon my noble mother, and then look upon this thing which you would fasten upon my youthful, aspiring soul. O, father, you do not know the girl. Ask Sir William—go and ask him, and he will tell you without prejudice or partiality."

Lord Tiverton was moved now in the soul, and he resolved at once that he would push the matter no further. But in a moment more the cloud came upon his face again, and he looked sternly upon his son. The storm without had increased—the rain came faster in torrents, and the wind howled more fearfully than before. But again the earl had forgotten the raging of the elements.

"Albion," he said, "I will say no more at present of Belinda Warner, and perhaps I shall urge her upon you no more. But there is yet

another subject on my mind, though I hope I have been misinformed. Perhaps you know to what I allude?"

"Go on," said Albion. He trembled slightly, and spoke carefully, for he mistrusted what his father meant, though he wondered how he could have come to a knowledge of it.

"I have heard that you visit a poor fisher-girl not far from here. Is it so?"

"It is, sir."

"And did you not know that such conduct was very wrong?"

"The girl whom I have visited is the one who saved my life; she but for whom you would now be childless."

"I do not blame you, my son, for feeling gratitude, and for expressing it, but if Miss Warner—"

"Then Miss Warner has been informing you of my doings?" said the youth, as his father hesitated—for the earl had let out the secret of his source of information without intending it. Albion spoke bitterly, and a look of contempt curled about his finely chiselled lips.

"Yes, she did tell me, though I did not mean to expose her—but it can't be helped now—and on the whole she should be very grateful to her, for it may be the means of saving you from evil. In truth, my boy, you have been very careless and reckless of that girl's happiness. Do you not realize that you are a man in every way calculated to inspire the warmest love in the female bosom?"

Albion made no answer.

"You have even allowed yourself to walk and converse with this low-born girl, and—you have taken her to your bosom, and even impressed her with kisses?"

"Miss Warner has been in fine business, truly!" uttered Albion, in the most bitter tone. "She plays the spy well!"

"She has not followed you, my boy," said the earl. He spoke with considerable kindness, for the idea of Belinda's likeness of character now struck him more forcibly, and even though he was thankful for the information thus revealed, yet he could not but detect the manner in which it had been collected.

"She has observed you from the cupola at the top of the house. Has she told me the truth?"

"She has," returned the youth, trembling.

"And do you not see how wrong such things are? I may even call them wicked. I cannot believe that you would—But no, I know you would not do that."

"What? Speak plainly, father."

"I know you would not harm that poor girl. You would not rob her of the only—"

"Stop, stop, my father. I know what you mean. Tear out my heart and give it to the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. Saw my body in quarters, and burn it to ashes, and cast those ashes to the winds of heaven, so that no more remembrance be had of me among men forever, when I could be guilty of such a deed!"

The father felt his love for his son awaking afresh, and for some moments he gazed into his noble features with true paternal pride. But he had more yet to say, though his anger was all gone.

"Then, my child, you must see how fatally your thoughtlessness could may operate. Do you not know that Alice Woodley may love you, love you with a love which shall break her heart when she knows that you can never return her love? Ah, my son, you have been blind indeed."

Albion hung down his head, and he trembled with a wild, thrilling emotion; but another thunder-crash at that moment broke upon the earth, and the earl did not notice his son's trembling.

"Father," at length spoke the youth, laying his hand again upon his parent's arm, and speaking in a soft, persuasive tone, "will you not let this pass until you can see the maiden of whom we speak? I would have you see her and converse with her."

"And therefore, my son?"

"That you may know her as I do."

"Albion, I know not that I understand you," said the earl, moving the youth's hand from his arm, and looking steadily into his face. "It may be a foolish question, I hope it is—but nevertheless I will ask it: Do you love that girl?"

"How can I help it?"

"That is not an answer. Do you love her?"

"With my whole soul."

"And you would make her your wife?"

"Would you but give your consent to such a consummation I should be the happiest man that dwells upon the earth."

A moment the earl was silent. The wind howled fearfully, the rain fell fast, and the thunder rolled upon the windows, and over and on the deep-toned thunder rolled through the heavens as though the very throes of mercy were quaking at its foundations; but neither the father nor the son heard the elementary war there.

"Albion," at length said the old man, and he

spoke with strange and calm distinctness, "before I would see you wedded with such a wife I would have you—"

The young man darted forward and seized his father by the wrist.

"Stop, stop—for the love of mercy, stop!" he cried, while his whole frame shook. "Speak no more now. Do not make a vow yet. Wait—wait for a while, at least."

"And why should I wait when my mind is made up?"

"To save me. Give me time for reflection, at least."

"But I would rather have you in your—"

"My father," interrupted the young man, in a tone that fairly startled the parent, "forgive me if I speak as may seem to unbecome the child; but you must not speak now. Beware what words you let fall from your lips. You must see Alice Woodley before you make up your mind. I know not what sort of feelings you may allow to govern yourself, but I can assure you that I am not prepared to throw away my very soul, just to please an empty, hollow prejudice. Alice Woodley risked her own life to save mine, and she did it, too, before she had ever seen my face. She is one of the most lovely beings that earth ever bore, and parity and virtue sit upon her soul as their regal throne. And then for another thing I would have you see her. I think you have seen her somewhere. There is a mystery about her. Speak no more, I beseech you—not now."

Lord Tiverton gazed into the face of his son, and twice his lips moved as though he would have spoken; but there was something in the look that met his gaze that kept his words back. He was not angry, for Albion had uttered forth his speech with too much depth of feeling to call up such a passion. He was almost awe-struck, and he was surprised, too. He had called his son to him with the fixed, firm purpose of tearing him away from his heart at once and forever unless he would promise on the spot to see Alice Woodley no more; but his purpose was not carried out, nor was it to be then. In truth that stout nobleman was moved by another will than his own. But he only kept his words back for the while. His purpose was still fixed, and in his heart he resolved that he would not relent from it.

He would have spoken further, but at that juncture, Sir William and Thomas entered the hall.

### CHAPTER XI.

THE WRECK!

The storm had now reached to a fearful power. The rain still fell in a deluge, and the wind seemed to have increased until it fairly roared with the voice of continuous thunder. The vivid lightning played in the heavens, and the load crashing of the thunder peals reverberated with terrific grandeur.

"God have mercy on any craft that may be caught on our coast without an anchorage to-night!" ejaculated Sir William, as he joined the earl.

"This gale comes from the eastward, doesn't it?" asked Albion.

"Yes," replied Tom, "from the northward and eastward. It comes sweeping down the whole breadth of the sea, and it seems as though 'twould wash the whole German Ocean upon our coast. My soul, how the waves break over the shore."

"What thunder!" uttered the earl, who had now laid aside the subject that had been occupying his thoughts. "Al, my boy, you are better off here than you would be at sea."

"O, give me plenty of sea-room, and this would be rare sport," replied the youth. "I've stood some tough gales in my time."

"Ah, there's a peal of thunder in the distance," said Sir William, as the sound of a clap more low than the others broke upon their ears.

"Yes," returned Tom. "Ah, there it is again. Egad, I'd like to swap with those who have that thunder at their doors. It ain't so heavy as ours."

"'Twould be heavy enough if it were here," said Sir William. "It comes sweeping down the shore."

"That is not thunder!" uttered Albion, as the third peal came sounding above the storm. He started forward towards the window as he spoke, and the others followed his example.

"No thunder!" repeated the baronet.

"No—hark—There it is again. Do you not distinguish it. My heavens, 'tis a gun! Death is at our door! There is a ship on our coast!"

"Not a ship, I hope," said the earl, shuddering. "Perhaps some small vessel."

"Not with such a gun as that," added Albion. "It is a heavy ship that carries that fellow."

Just then came the fourth report, and as the dull sound rumbled in with the voice of the tempest, Albion Tiverton started towards the door.

"Call up the servants," he cried, "and let us have lanterns and ropes. We must go down to the beach. Come, Tom, on with your duds. I have a storm-suit in my chest, and I'll don it in a twinkling. Sir William, you call the servants and light the lanterns."

"But my son," urged the earl, in a hesitating voice, "you will not expose yourself."

"My soul, father, talk not of exposure now. It is, I hear, that gun again! You say there is no need of your exposure to such a storm, but it is part of my profession. Don't you come out. You stay and watch here, and if danger comes to me, then you must remember me in your prayers. Now, then, Tom, look alive."

As Albion thus spoke, he seized a candle from the hand of a servant who had just entered the hall, and hastened every to his room. The old earl looked after him as he disappeared, and a light of pride danced in his eyes.

"He is a noble fellow, after all," he uttered.

"So he is," added Sir William, who had called the servants and returned.

"And he hasn't throw himself away," added the earl.

"No he hasn't," responded the baronet.

"I shall let him."

"Nor would I if he were my son."

"I'll see him—anywhere, before he shall cast himself away on a fisher-girl."

"Yes," suggested Sir William, "what is a fisher-girl to do with loving the son of an earl?"

"Nothing. It's preposterous."

"So it is, my lord. She ought to be transported for daring to touch him with her hands. How dared she save him from drowning? It was very low and ill-bred of her to do so."

The lordship looked into Sir William's face with a look of surprise.

"It ought to have been the daughter of some earl, or duke, or some princess," added the baronet; "and then the poor fellow could have loved her for her nobleness. I think most any of our delicate, hiping, gentle-blooded ladies would have done the work full as well as that low-born, degraded fisher-girl did. But then, honestly, I think she ought to have a few shillings for her labor. The risking of her life is nothing, for what is her life compared with the life of a gentleman? I don't think fisher-girls count more than half a soul, at the most, in heaven! And they had ought to. They said so good as other folks. What! have such a noble youth as that marry with a fisher-girl! Preposterous! What could she do as a wife? Only just love him, and honor him, and cherish him with her whole heart, and make him a faithful, heavenly companion, for life, in whose bosom he could ever find a retreat from the sorrows of the world, and in whose arms he could ever find a haven on earth's sea. No, no—such as he should have a lady for a wife. He wants more gold, and more titles, to make him happy. Fisher-girls! Preposterous!"

At that moment Tom and Albion came in. The face of the latter was flushed with excitement and hurry, but he was yet calm in judgment. He had thrown on an oil-cloth suit through-out, and on his head he wore a stout leather cap. Tom was also rigged for exposure; and the servants who stood in waiting, six in number, were well prepared for the storm, though they had the prospect of thorough drenching.

"Now," cried Albion—

"Wait a moment," interrupted the old baronet, "I am going."

"Not by any means," firmly replied Tom.

"Nur shall you father," said Albion.

The earl raised his head, and asked his son what he had said. In truth, my Lord of Winchester and Tiverton had been thinking of those strange words which the baronet had spoken, and he had not noticed what was passing about him.

Albion repeated his order, but it availed nothing, for in a moment more the two old men put their heads together, and swore they'd go.

But our hero did not wait for them. He saw that his men had ropes, and having assured himself his lantern was so fixed that the wind could not extinguish the light, he set out. When he reached the gravelled carriage-path he was forced to stop a moment to collect his energies, for the tempest was more terrible than he had thought. He soon braced himself, however, and then, with a word of encouragement to his followers, he started on again.

Tom, like Albion, had on an oil-cloth suit, but the others only had on thick woolen garments, and they were wet to the skin in a few minutes, but they thought not of that. The rain fell—or rather, was driven—in a perfect torrent, and for a moment or two it was almost as though the power of the sea broke upon the coast with a roar that set the thunder at defiance, and the spray was thrown far up over the land. Ever and anon the lightning dashed through the heavens, revealing the scene around, and the boiling, hissing sea was terrible to look upon.

At length the party reached the shore of the bay, where they could look about them without the intervening of trees. The signal gun was still heard at short intervals, but the roar of the surge was so deafening that its direction could not be made out. Albion had hoped that he should be able to make it out from the light of its flash, but the driving rain, and the thick spray which was thrown high up into the air, shut out its view.

"Here we'll stand," said Albion, "and wait for the lightning, and then if we look sharp we may make her out. Keep your eyes seaward, now, and look sharp."

In a few moments the lightning again leaped along the black sky, and the sea was bathed in the lurid glare for miles around.

"There she is!" shouted one of the men, who had perched himself upon a high rock. "I have her berth, and I'll make her out next time."

Albion raised his lantern and jumped upon the rock by the side of the man, and when the next flash came he made out the vessel distinctly. She was a ship—a heavy ship—with a close-reefed mainmast set. He could tell just much. He waited for the next flash, and he saw that she was laying to upon the leeward tack, and that her lighter spars were all off, and her fore and mainmast topsails hoisted. He had also seen that the sea was breaking wildly over her, and that she was fast drifting towards the shore. By this time Tom had made his way upon the rock, and at the next flash of lightning he saw the ill-fated craft.

"Merciful heavens!" he cried, "she is drifting upon the Imp's Rocks as sure as death! See! see! She is almost upon them now!"

"She is," echoed one of the men.

"Then no power on earth can save her," said Albion, who was watching with nervous anxiety for the next flash.

At this juncture our hero heard the voice of his father near the rock, and on turning he saw both the old men with each of them a lantern.

"What is it?" cried Sir William.

But before his question could be answered the great night-light of heaven flared out again through the terror-laden space, and the ship was plainly seen. The lightning played through the black vault in loud, fantastic shapes, and the glare was unusually long in continuance. Albion could see where the sea was broken more terribly by the sunken rocks, and he saw, too, that the ship was not half a cable's length from them, and that she was being tossed about like a plaything in the hands of a reckless boy.

Once more the heavens were black as ink, and the lanterns looked like dim sparks just dying amid their own embers, after the blinding light of the electric flame had gone. In a few words as possible Albion told the story of what he and Tom, and then he bent his ear towards the spot where he had last seen the ship. The surge roared on, and the rain fell in blinding torrents, but our hero noticed it not. He waited for the death-bell he was sure must come. There was one more boom of the gun, and while its dull voice was yet lingering with the roar of the tempest, there came a sharp, wild cry over the water. Albion shuddered, for he knew that the death-angel was at work there!

"The hour has come!" he cried to Sir William.

"The ship has struck. We will stay, for we may find some who will wash ashore."

Both the old men worked their way upon the rock, and in a few moments more the heavens burst again. The ship was upon the rocks—her mainmast gone, and her hull open to the beam-ends. The sea was washing madly over her, and her boats and spars were being fast washed away. Albion was sure he saw men clinging to the rigging, and his heart beat with a painful emotion. "Alas!" he uttered, turning to his father, who now stood by his side, "we cannot save them."

"Most assuredly not."

There was another flash—bright and glaring.

"What is it?" cried the earl; and he pointed off to the low beach on the opposite side of the bay.

It was a female form which he had seen, and Albion's quick eye had caught the same.

"What can it be?" the earl repeated, in tones of surprise. "A woman out in this storm?"

"That is an angel of mercy," replied the youth, in a subdued tone. "No storm nor tempest will stay her when danger calls, or suffering humanity wants succor."

The old man gazed into his son's face. The glare of the lightning had gone, but he held up his lantern.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"Alice Woodley—the fish-girl," replied Albion.

The parent made no further remark, but he murmured something over to himself which sounded very much like regret. But that was not the time for such subjects, and Lord Tiverton turned his attention to the ship. Not so Albion, however. When the next flash came his eyes were upon the opposite beach, and he saw that same form standing there yet, right where the surge washed up about her feet, and he could see that in her hand she held a lantern.

It was pitchy black once more, but away off upon the other beach, our hero could see the tiny spark of a lantern. He was nervous and anxious.

"Father," he at length said, "I am going over upon the other beach. If any people are washed ashore, some of them will be as likely to wash up there as here."

"And is that all you would go for, my boy?" the old man asked, holding up his lantern and looking into his son's face.

"No, sir, not by one half. I would go to seek that noble girl in her dwelling, and myself take her place on the watch."

"Go then; but remember you are my friend!"

Albion quickly called off three of the men to follow him upon the other side of the bay, and Tom was determined to go, too.

"Yes, Master Thomas, you go and keep him company," said the earl, quickly, as though he were anxious that there should be a check upon the actions of his son. "Your father and I will look out for this place. Go—and look out for—"

But Tom heard no more. He saw Albion's lantern clear away ahead, and he hastened on to overtake him. They were obliged to take the upper path, for the lower one was so washed by the sea that it was impossible to keep it. The lanterns were held out ahead, and they cast their dim, struggling light far enough into the utter blackness to enable the adventurers to keep on at a respectable pace. The walk was somewhat of a tedious one, but it was at length accomplished, and Albion found Alice standing watch upon the beach. He spoke to her a few hurried words of love before the others came up, and he chided her for being there; but at his urgent request she consented to retire to the house when she was assured that the place should be watched, and any unfortunate craft for who might chance to come ashore.

The three men who had accompanied Albion and Tom, were loud and earnest in their blessings upon the head of the beautiful girl, and Albion felt grateful to them.

After our hero had succeeded in getting Alice beneath the shelter of her cot, he once more turned his attention to the ship. The rain began to fall more slowly, and the lightning came not so often, nor was it so bright or lasting. It was more distant, so distant that its thunder could not be heard. But the wind still maintained its power with howling fury. Our hero could see that the ship was fast coming to pieces, her masts were all gone, her bulwarks stove off, and her stern broken, and the deck of the poop gone. And yet no human thing had come ashore. Not long, however, was he to wait for the shadow of the death-angel. Half an hour had not passed when something was washed up, and Albion found it to be a human body. In fifteen minutes more three other bodies followed it—and that was all. The hours dragged slowly away, and no more dead bodies came. At length the youth looked at his watch, and it was midnight. For two hours there had been no lightning, and the wind howled coldly and dimly.

"Tom," our hero said, "there will no more bodies come until the ship is in pieces. It is now past midnight."

"Then let us return to the hall, and in the morning we will come down again. There is no use in remaining here."

"So be it. But one of these men must go and sleep at the widow's cot."

"Yes, Mosely will go. He has often remained there when he has been at work for the widow. Mosely, you will go?"

"Certainly," returned the man, who was one of Sir William's foresters—a stout, powerful man, somewhere between forty and fifty years of age.

"You will sleep with one eye open, and jump if there is need."

"Certainly."

"And tell the women that we will be down early in the morning."

"Yes, sir."

"All right."

So Mosely went towards the cot, and Albion and his companions turned towards the road that led over the bridge and up to Linden Hall.

When they reached the house they found that Sir William and the earl had already retired, and without further ceremony they threw off their wet clothes—drank some heated wine, and then followed the example of their elders.

Albion Tiverton was worn and fatigued, but it was some time before he slept, for the events of the day were enough to work unwearyingly upon his mind. At length, however, he slept, and while he slept he dreamed, but he did not dream of the strange unwinding of mystery which the ill-fated wreck had in store for him.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE OLD MAN OF THE WRECK.

WHEN Albion arose on the following morning he found that the sun was just rising, and that the storm had all passed away. The wind was gone, and only a gentle breeze played about his window. Yet he could hear the roar of the surge upon the coast, and a cold shudder crept through his frame as he thought how solemn was the requiem those waves were sounding. When he looked out at the window he saw the tracks of the storm-flood. The whole park was strewn with fragments of boards and shingles, and broken bouquets which the gale had swept from their former places. Great trees were bent over, as though they had suddenly grown old and decrepit, the great branches were twisted and broken, the smaller boughs hurtled about, and many of the boughs and twigs were torn in pieces and laid prostrate.

It was truly a scene of desolation, but our hero did not stop long to contemplate it. As soon as he could dress himself he hurried away to Tom's room, where he found his friend still fast asleep; but he awoke the sleeper, and in a short time they were both ready to set out. Albion made his way first to the bridge, meaning to seek the widow's cot at once. Tom of course made no objections to this, for he would have chosen that course himself.

The sun was well up when the two young men reached the cot, and they found that Mosely was already upon the beach at work. Alice was pale and agitated, for not far from her door there was a pile of ghastly corpses, and she had been helping to place them there. But Albion made her retire to the house, and she complied without resistance. After this our hero joined Mosely.

The ship had been mostly knocked to pieces, but yet a good part of her hull remained upon the rocks. Her back was broken, but she had not yet been rent in twain, though all her bulwarks were gone, and the greater part of her spar deck ripped up and washed off. The lay now with her stern and bows both in the water, and her waist higher up, and even having fallen while her centre rested among the rocks. The beach was strewn with pieces of the wreck, but there were no more dead bodies upon this side of the bay, Mosely having gathered up all he could find.

And he had found seven, and they were reposing upon the greenward near the cot.

"I've been up, at work here, ever since daylight," said Mosely, "and you see I have gathered up all the dead ones I could find. There's more of 'em up the bay, and some on the other side. But I guess the ship only had her common crew aboard, for you see all these be common sailors."

"Yes, I see," returned Albion. "But have you found the name of the ship?"

"Yes, I found it on a bucket that came ashore. It's the *Floata*, of Newcastle."

"Ah, she laid at Gravesend when I came out. But she's done for now."

As soon as our hero became satisfied that there was nothing more for him to do upon that side of the beach he started around for the opposite shore, having first, however, seen Alice, and made her promise to have some regard for her own physical welfare.

Along on the shore of the bay, after they had crossed the bridge, they found other dead bodies, and when they reached the rock where they had stood the night before they found more of the sad mementoes of the wreck. In all they had found twenty-four corpses, and they supposed there might be more on board the wreck. There was a surge-bone on shore belonging to Sir William; and the men, eight of whom had just come down from the hall accompanied by the corner and others, agreed at once to man it, if Albion wished to go out. This surf or life-boat, our hero knew would be perfectly safe upon the sea, and he at once made up his mind to venture out to the wreck. Tom agreed to go with him, and the boat was at once hauled down and shoved off.

"The sea was running high, but the stout men bent themselves to their oars, and the boat bore proudly up. Albion took the helm, and with a practised hand and eye he steered over the seas with the least possible danger, and at length the wreck was close at hand. Directly under the lee of the hull, amidst there was a space of comparatively smooth water, where nothing could touch the boat save the spray that came dashing over the wreck, and for this our adventurers cared nothing, for they were wet to the skin now, and if the boat should fill with water it could not sink, and could, moreover, be easily bailed out; so up to this place Albion steered his craft, and in a few moments more he stood upon the wreck."

The hull had by some means been lifted up from its beam-ends, and now lay so that a man could stand upon her deck with comparative ease so far as the position of the stand-place was concerned, but the seas which came dashing over rendered it necessary for them to keep their hands upon some firm holdfast. The whole of the poor wreck was in a wretched condition, the cabin here, and the whole deck had not only been swept clear, but more than half the deck itself was gone. Albion looked down into the steerage, and he saw that the mid portions of that deck were bare, though the water washed over them every time there came a heavy sea. He let himself down into this part of the ship, and everything which was in good condition, the cabin here, and the whole deck had not only been swept clear, but more than half the deck itself was gone. 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He let himself down into this part of the ship, and everything which was in good condition, the cabin here, and the whole deck





[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE CHANGE.

BY W. G. ROYCE.

There is an animal we meet,

That will desert our city if;

The country greenhorn, just arrived

In this great bustling city!

He wanders up and down our streets,  
All innocent and green,  
And drowsy by night, of everything  
He has by daylight seen!His coat is long, his pants are short,  
His boots are awful thick;  
And in his hands he firmly holds  
His heavy hickory stick.His hands are browned with honest toil,  
His hair well combed down,  
By which 'tis very plainly seen,  
He's 'laidly come to town!Two years have past—behold him now!  
A patient breadbox dandy;  
Who uses for the public good,  
His stock of oysters so handy.His coat is in the latest style,  
His vest is also modern;  
His pants contain too little cloth,  
To be a heavy load.His friends, too, often tell him now  
How he's improved of late—  
And, for his future great success,  
Fondly anticipate!The change is great, but is it good?  
If he is so much improved,  
Perhaps 'twere well, to leave him home  
He never here had moved!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## FIRST AND SECOND WIFE.

BY MRS. M. E. ROBINSON.

"HEM that craved for me that I brought in yesterday; I want it this evening."

The speaker, a stout, ruddy "six footer," looked down on a small, pale woman, who sat holding a fat boy of seven months, while another in his third summer was pulling lustily at her dress.

"You've got three very good ones, ready to wear; want one of those suit you? I've got a great deal to do to-day," was the reply.

"No; I want the new one; I like a change once in a while. And I really wish you'd stop pleading such an amount of work when I ask a small favor. You always do."

"O, no; not always," she rejoined, mildly.

"Sometimes the children are more trouble than at others."

"There it is again—the children! I'm tired of hearing the old story. Anybody would think, by your talk, that you were killed with work, with only your husband and two little boys, who, I dare say, are as easy to take care of as the common run of children. And what you had six, instead of two?"

Mrs. Luther did not reply. A sad look stole over her once round, rosy face, which she quickly averted to conceal an unbidden tear.

"I'll send home a turkey and some vegetables."

Now don't fail to get up something nice in the way of pudding, for I forgot to mention that Morris will dine with us to-day, and he's eating an epicure," added Mr. Luther, re-opening the door he had just closed. "Well, what now? Crying, I declare! Now if there's any one thing that I dislike more than another, it's to see a woman cry about nothing!" he exclaimed, in a fretful, injured tone, as a second tear, bolder than the first, rolled down his wife's face, and dropped on the infant's soft hair.

"Don't speak so harshly, John. I'll try my best to please you," she murmured, with quivering lips and tremulous voice.

"Well, that's all that's required of you; so there's no use in making a child of yourself."

Thus speaking, Mr. Luther slammed the door, walked hurriedly through the entry, and into the street.

His wife leaned her head on her hand and wept unheeded. The baby-boy looked up wonderingly into her face, while her first-born, relaxing its hold of her dress, stroked her cheek lovingly with its tiny hand, slipping in infantile accents, "Mo love mama—mo love mama."

Mrs. Luther was deeply moved by this touching demonstration of childish sympathy. She clasped her little comforters in a long embrace, and then wiping away all traces of agitation, proceeded about her daily duties with a calm though saddened countenance.

Four years before, she was a glad, gleeful maiden, knowing no care, feeling no sorrow, and guarded jealously by fond parents, who liked not even the winds of heaven to blow upon her too roughly. A delicate patient was she, whose young leaves and bursting buds expanded wondrously in the soft sunshine of love, the gentle dew of sympathy, and the balmy breath of kindness. A trusting, loving, gaily nature was hers, painting the future in rainbow lines, crowning it with a garland of evergreen, which should outlive the heat of summer, the blasts of autumn, and the snows of winter. Among her fancies, girl-like, she pictured one, whose very existence would be so intermingled with her own, that to doubt him would be to wrong herself.

But, alas! gentle maiden, Jean Paul Richter spoke truth when he said: "Thou knowest not that thy gentle heart needs something warmer than blood, and the head better dreams than the pillow can give it; that the perfumed flower-leaves of thy youth must soon be drawn together to form the sensual, stately leaves, to protect the honey cup for thy husband, who will soon demand of thee neither tenderness nor a light heart, but only rough working finger, feet never weary, laboring arms, and a quiet, paralytic tongue."

And so when Agnes Tracy thought she recognized her second self in one of the stronger sex, she gave him, unreservedly, the whole wealth of her affections, won by the honeyed words and

the winning tones which are so common before matrimony, but which, unfortunately for both parties, are generally neglected afterward. She left father, mother, brother, home, friends, all, to become a wife, never harboring a suspicion that the chosen one did not mean all he said, even to loving her better than himself.

But time, that great expander of mysteries, solver of problems, and the stern teacher whose lessons may not be scorned, brought convictions which she could not will withstand. Gradually the truth dawned upon her that she had married a cold, selfish man, who had been attracted by her personal beauty and accomplishments, and perhaps—but Agnes spurned that idea at first—by the considerable property her kind father had made over to her, which he lost no time in putting in a "safe place." Where was her ideal love? Where the earnest ardor, with his looks of tenderness and his words of eloquence? Echo, in mournful, dirge-like tones, repeated, where?

Mrs. Luther was a disappointed wife. Her husband, although not positively unkind, was unloving; and that, to one of her sensitive, susceptible nature, was almost equivalent. He expressed no sympathy in her movements, considered it beneath his dignity to inquire into anything relating to domestic matters, and labored under the common delusion that housework *did itself*; and that the care of children (one in arms) was nothing but a pleasure. It wasn't at all likely that his wife was ever tired, so he rarely condescended to ask her the question, or offer to relieve her of the charge of either of her offspring when he happened to be in the house an hour or two. O, no; Mrs. Luther was undoubtedly made of iron, or some other material that wouldn't wear out, and might be on her feet all day, and awake all night, without any detriment to her physical system. A washerwoman was employed weekly, and what reasonable wife could ask more? If he hired a girl, there'd be nothing left for Mrs. Luther to do, and the probability was that she would either be wearing her clothes out tramping the streets, or else relapse into reprehensible habits of idleness, which ill become a good wife and devoted mother. But we will not detail more of Mr. Luther's eccentricities—in charity we will give them to his readers, but let them develop as we proceed with our sketch.

Conversations like the one we have narrated, were not infrequent. Mrs. Luther acceded to his inconsiderate and unfeeling demands, because she could not well do otherwise; she was dependent upon him for even her small need of happiness. Her parents had deceased soon after her marriage, her only brother lived in a distant city, leaving no friendly ally; and she was left to her earnest longings for spirit companionship.

Had she been childless, she would have wished to die; but the remembrance of the loved ones committed to her charge, reconciled her to an existence, which, without them, would have been insupportable.

On this morning, like many other weary mornings which now were counted by months and years, Mrs. Luther commenced her task—the severe physical labor of attending, unaided, to the wants of two young children, cleaning, cooking, and the endless minutiae of domestic affairs. The room did not present a very encouraging aspect. The breakfast table stood in the centre, with the usual complement of odds and ends, unwashed dishes, etc. Mr. Luther's dressing-room, slippers, shaving apparatus (he generally made a dressing-room of the kitchen in the winter, it was so much more comfortable) lay scattered about in beautiful confusion, while headless horses, tailless dogs, broken miniature horses, squeaking trumpets, and disabled soldiers, might be seen upon and under every chair; the mother availing herself of anything in the shape of toys which would serve to amuse her little charges while her attention was elsewhere directed. There were so many things to be done she hardly knew what to do first; each day brought its particular duties which could not well be omitted. She took up the baby, nicely washed and neatly dressed the little fellow, and placing him in the cradle, went through with the same operation with the mischievous prettier who had, meanwhile, busied himself with overturning her work-box, to the imminent detriment of several spoons of white thread which he deposited in the coal-hod.

When this was done, the turkey and a quantity of vegetables were brought in, and all matters being secondary to dinner (Mr. Luther never overlooked any omission or tardiness in that department of housekeeping), everything else was set aside for that. It is no small matter to dress and prepare a large fowl for the oven, as any one knows who has had experience in such particulars; and by the time that duty was successfully accomplished, the vegetables duly cleaned, and the cranberries stewed and dished, the pudding claimed attention. A few minutes reflection decided what it should be, when the best part of an hour was spent in putting the different materials together. She was so busily engaged in this proceeding, that ambitious little Josie mounted an opposite table unnoticed, and stood gazing curiously at his round face in the looking-glass. An inadvertent step backward sent him tumbling to the floor, when the frightened mother, forgetting her pudding in anxiety for her child, soothed and rocked him until his sole were lashed in sleep. Just then the baby, indignant at her long neglect, screamed lustily, of course waking his brother, whose swollen head inclined him also to join in the chorus, which the perturbed parent had much difficulty in stilling.

A nervous glance at the stove reminded her that the coal was getting low, and another at the clock, that the moment was precious. She ran to the door and brought from the street (Mr. Luther always managed to forget that), and so his wife, with aching head and trembling step, was forced to fill the hod, and drag it slowly up the stairs. The fire was too far gone to revive quickly without the aid of charcoal, so a second journey was made below for that article, and after persevering efforts, a fresh blaze was started.

Worried and anxious, Mrs. Luther alternately looked at the clock and the turkey; the hands of the former went round stealthily, but the latter seemed not to bake at all. Dinner would inevitably be late, and what would Mr. Luther say? He rarely made any allowances for circumstances, reproached her for neglect, and wondered why she didn't punish Josie, when he happened to get a glimpse of tidying him. Women always went to work the wrong way to do anything, and then when there was trouble, the husband got blamed for it."

The clock struck twelve. Between the turkey, the fire, and the children, the breakfast dishes remained in *status quo*. Those were to be washed, the knives to be cleaned, the table to be laid, the vegetables to be cooked, the pudding to be watched, the fire in the parlor to be kindled, and her own toilet made for company, in just sixty minutes. Poor Mrs. Luther! she was in an unfavorable situation for entertaining a visitor agreeably. Her temples throbed with pain, her face was heated and flushed, while her knees bent under her weak weakness. And yet she must make an effort to look glad and happy, or her husband would wish, as he had often done, that he had not married a moping, complaining wife. Ah, it is the little things of life that make our happiness or misery! How much a single kind word may have encouraged the disheartened one—how much joy a sympathizing word would have infused into her sinking soul! O, ye husbands! be not chary of these blessed heart-words which cost you nothing. They may be but trifles to you, but they are much, very much to the mother of your children. Deprive her not of them, for they sustain her wonderfully in her wearisome struggle with life's cares.

But we are musing, forgetting the while that the fine fowl in the oven has, in return for Mrs. Luther's close attention, put on a beautiful brown, that cannot be excelled. Again and again, despite the glowing coal that made her cheeks tingle, she moistened it with the fluid in the pan, prepared a delicious gravy, seasoned the vegetables to a charm, and had the satisfaction (by making an extraordinary effort) of getting everything in readiness simultaneously with the city clock's striking one, and the entrance of her husband and his friend. Leaving the latter in the parlor, Mr. Luther at once proceeded to the kitchen.

"Dinner ready?" was his first inquiry upon entering.

"Almost," responded Mrs. Luther, lifting the fowl from the stove to the table.

"Roasted, as sure as I'm alive!" he exclaimed, taking a step forward. "What could induce you to cook in this way?"

"Why, I took it for granted that you wanted it roasted!" You said nothing to the contrary," she replied, with considerable surprise.

"Well, what if I didn't? People boil turkeys, sometimes, as well as bake them, and a change once in a while is desirable. I sha'n't enjoy the dinner a bit. I had set my mind upon boiled turkey—roast you can find at every corner," said Mr. Luther, with ill-concealed impatience.

"I am sorry you are disappointed. If you had told me your wishes, I would have governed myself by them," his wife patiently rejoined, struggling to repress her wounded feelings.

"We can eat it as it is, I suppose. What have you got for pudding?—a batter, I hope—Morris is fond of them, he tells me," added the husband, in a tone rather more amiable than his.

"No, I have made a very nice plum pudding, as you said last week you liked them much better than batter."

"What if I did? Because one likes beef-steak, it's no sign he wants it every day for dinner! It seems to me you have put yourself out in the shape of things. But it's always so—I might have known better than to ask company."

"I think Morris never eats plum pudding; I think I remember his saying so."

"But how should I know his likes or dislikes?" remonstrated Mrs. Luther, justly hurt by the ingratitude and capriciousness of his last remark.

"By asking, I suppose; I know of no other way. Now don't disgrace your face with crying. I beg of you, Mrs. Luther, let it look red and blithered enough already. And pray give those children's faces, for I wouldn't have Morris see them in that trim for a ten-spot. I don't see what's to prevent you from keeping Josie out of the coal hod. If you had a large family I shouldn't wonder, but as it is, it's a mystery to me," added the affectionate father, lifting Josie from the floor, and seating him in a chair with more force than was necessary; a movement that so offended the latter that he set up a loud scream, which the irritated parent endeavored to hush by a blow upon the ear. But as this did not mend the matter, he was forced to turn the child over to his mother, with the consoling remark "that she had ruined him."

And this was Mrs. Luther's reward for her mother's work; the fire for compensating for the numberless steps she had taken, the petty trials she had endured, and a sincere desire to have everything performed to her husband's satisfaction. No wonder the sight would come, and the tear would flow. Not a syllable of commendation for the pains she had taken to please him, not a word of merited praise for her promptness; nothing but fault-finding. Her efforts were taken as a matter of course. She was his wife, and these duties devolved upon her, sick or well, weak or strong, and it was the height of folly for her to expect to be pitied and fondled like a spoiled child.

Mrs. Luther strove hard to appear calm, and unconcerned that anything had happened to occasion disagreeable reflections, and succeeded for a moment, but her face betrayed her by its credit. Over-exertion had brought on a feeling of exhaustion, and entirely deprived her of appetite; but she had the gratification of seeing her visitor eat heartily of turkey, and hearing him praise the pudding, which Mr. Luther had prophesied so unkindly he would not like. This was something; yet a few words of like character from her husband would have pos-

sessed far more value in her eyes. But censure was often on his lips than commendation, so he contented himself by observing "that the room was full of smoke," in a voice that laid the blame entirely at her door, when in fact the east wind was at the bottom of the annoyance.

All things have an end, and so had the dinner. The two gentlemen sat themselves up in the parlor to smoke (that kind of vapor rarely incommoded Mr. Luther) and converse at their leisure, while the wife, faint, tired and sad, rocked the baby to sleep, gave Josie something new to play with, and then, without a moment's rest, began the afternoon programme. All the dinner things were to be cleaned and returned to their places, beside sweeping and dusting, chamber-work, etc., which had necessarily been left undone in the morning. When these were at length accomplished, the short winter's day had materially diminished. Mrs. Luther thought of the cravat. Should she sit down and hem it immediately, lest something should happen to prevent her doing it at all? Such had been her intention, but reflecting that there would be quite as much displeasure manifested if the nice cake and light warm bread were not forthcoming at tea-time, with a sigh, deep and bitter, she set herself about making them. Four times she was interrupted in this employment; twice to rock and feed the worrisome babe, and twice to answer a noisy summons at the door.

Half an hour of daylight remained, as Mrs. Luther seated herself by the window, drew up the shade as far as possible, and with one foot on the cradle to move it back and forth gently when the child stirred in its troubled sleep, and the other for the accommodation of Josie, who was using it as a kind of horse, turned down the hem of the cravat. It was of quite dark material, obliging her to look steadily and closely at the stitches. Her eyes—never strong—smarted under this continued strain, and before one side was completed, she was forced to rise and bathe them in cold water. This relieved her somewhat, and lighting a lamp, she returned to her stitching, pausing only to pick up and console Josie for a sorry bump. The monitor on the shelf pointed warningly to the hour when Mr. Luther usually returned, making her nervous fingers fly the faster.

Hark!—the outer door is opened, while a noise as of some one groping his way, assures the trembling wife that she has forgotten the lighting of the hall-lamp, in her haste to hem the cravat.

"Pitch dark, and no light in the house?" was his ungracious exclamation, as he strode into the room. "I wish you'd see to things properly, and not oblige a man to stumble round in this way!"

Mrs. Luther tried to excuse herself, but she was cut short.

"Don't stop to make up a string of reasons, for I don't want to hear 'em. I'm tired, and want my tea as soon as possible. No sign of supper, is there?"

Mrs. Luther intimated that she had nothing to do but to lay the table.

"I thought to have been done before dark."

"I know it; but I have been busy every minute."

"Undoubtedly," was the husband's sarcastic reply. "You have more to do than any woman I know of. And why should I let that cravat be till this time of day, is more than I know. I suspect, however, if the truth was known, that you are a trifle or more slack, Mrs. Luther. Don't it come as near that as anything?"

The latter made no rejoinder; but in deep respect, but because her heart was too full to speak. The last stitch was taken, the cravat folded and laid aside, and tea soon on the table. Mr. Luther, apparently half ashamed of his unhusbandlike remarks, offered to hold the baby a few minutes, and in several ways tried to appear to better advantage. But the wife could not so soon forget his harsh, unkind words, so the meal was concluded with very little on either side, after which he dressed himself for an evening's entertainment away from home. He did not tell where he was going, or mention at what hour he should return; but as this was not the first occurrence of the same nature, Mrs. Luther was not surprised, as indeed she would have been, had he spent an entire evening with her. That was something which seldom happened now, but she had learned not to expect it. Being too much fatigued to sew, several long hours of solitary reflection followed. In melancholy mood, she sat rocking slowly until ten o'clock, when Mr. Luther came in. He made a few casual remarks, then took up the lamp and went up stairs, followed by his wife, carrying the youngest child, who, for a day or two, had given indications of illness. The wearied mother gladly sought her pillow, hoping to lose in balmy sleep the consciousness of mental and physical suffering. But the babe was not quiet long; it grew restless, and moaned constantly as if in pain.

"Do stop that child's noise, Agnes!" said the husband. "I haven't been able yet to get the child to sleep. Get up and rock him a little, can't you?"

He went to bed, but as the proposed rocking did not bring about the desired end, she took the heavy boy in her arms, and paced the room softly a long time lest Mr. Luther should be further disturbed. It never once entered the thoughts of the latter individual to offer his assistance, when she remarked that the child, young Harry was seriously ill, he promptly dominated it a "fit of temper, which she would do well not to humor." But the anxious mother had different convictions, which every moment strengthened. She knew that the presence of a physician was indispensable, yet this suggestion was pronounced highly ridiculous by Mr. Luther, who was not prevailed upon to dress and go for one until after midnight.

It is not needful to dwell upon what transpired afterward; suffice it to say, that little Harry lived but three days, and in a week Mrs. Luther was childless. Her darlings had been transplanted to a brighter sphere. Cholera infantum had done its work, and the bereaved parent was left with nothing to love, and no one

to love her. Her former trials sunk into insignificance beside this great affliction, which would not let her be comforted. Now, more than ever, she yearned for that sympathy which is so grateful to the chastened and subdued spirit. But ah! where should she look for it? Mr. Luther was not devoid of fatherly feeling, but his nature was so unlike hers, that he could not sympathize with her grief, or appreciate her undying love for her children. At first he was rather kinder, and at times spoke as he was wont to do, long ago. But this didn't last long; he soon became the same exacting, fault-finding person as of old. One day in his wife's life was like every other day—no change, no pleasant variation to break the weary monotony of her existence, which became so wholly absorbed in the remembrance of her bereavement, that her sinking health rapidly gave way. The brilliancy of her eyes, the hectic on either cheek, and the sharp, dry cough, betokened the presence of the pitiless foe—consumption. Yet the husband seemed entirely unaware of all this, and so was quite unprepared to hear her feebly say, one morning, "that she felt unable to rise." He looked earnestly at her a moment, then, without speaking of his purpose, called in a neighbor, and went for medical aid.

It was too late. She never left her room from that day, and in less than three months was laid beside her loved ones in Mount Auburn. In the judgment of the public, she died of hereditary consumption; in that of the neighbors, "she was worked to death," to use the precise term they employed; but, reader, she went down to the grave with a broken heart, induced by a selfish, fault-finding, unloving husband.

Mr. Luther mourned his wife very much as one regrets the loss of a good horse, or a favorite servant—he missed her services; very soon discovering that a housekeeper but poorly supplied her place. Badly cooked meat, unpalatable pantry, sloppy tea, and heavy broods, he was not accustomed to see upon his table. He could not, but to no other purpose than to get very looks and worse meals. Feeling suspicion that there was nothing like a wife, after all, he looked about for some one to take upon themselves the honor and responsibility incident to that station. But he was particularly unlucky; those who wanted said "No," emphatically, and those who wanted him were scarce, and not to his mind. Besides, eligible unmarried ladies said that the first Mrs. Luther seldom looked cheerful and happy, and that was a "bad sign."

But the ambitious widow did not despair. He took a journey somewhere, and returned, after a three weeks' absence, with a youngish, good-looking lady, whom he introduced as his wife. He found her in a curious way. This is the circumstance. One evening, entering a counting-house, where a divorce suit was pending, a female, sitting in front, attracted his attention, or, as the saying is, "took his eye." Upon inquiry he ascertained that the party praying for a separation from her liege lord, who seemingly cared very little for the result, for he sat near, coolly reading a newspaper, or talking carefully with a friend.

To be brief, Mr. Luther became interested in the case, and in the woman; and upon bearing the ingenious pleadings of the counsel for the fair complainant, soon came to believe that she was a very much aggrieved individual; for, he remembered, Mr. Luther had a great store of sympathy for other people's wives, although it has been shown that he had little for his late wife. Mrs. Luther, therefore, claiming that her suit, and our gentleman soon after managed to gain an introduction, and finally gained her, which ultimately proved no great gain on either side.

The new wife turned out to be an indolent, sullen, heady sort of a woman, altogether different from her predecessor. She liked going to bed early and getting up late, insisted upon having a cook and waiting girl, and required much attention; thought of her comfort only as a deal above sewing on buttons and mending hose. She was willing to make just effort enough to take care of her own wardrobe, and appear on fashionable promenade on pleasant days. Mr. Luther endeavored to exert his authority, and make the new Mrs. Luther tread in the footsteps of the departed; but to no purpose. It was diametrically at odds with the late Mrs. Luther's nature, as she was so selfish, as selfish as he. The latter could scarcely claim his own comfort all his life-time—he had done the same; the one meant to continue in so doing—so did the other. If he was obstinate, so was she; if he got angry, she flew into a passion. If Mr. Luther threatened, Mrs. Luther threatened also, and so things went on, matters settling down into a state of generally understood antagonism; while sullen looks (if not recriminating words) became the order. Everything went wrong in the kitchen, in his estimation. There was a shameful waste of provision, and a lack of skill and neatness in that department; and if he ventured to remonstrate, he was assailed by the united powers of cook, wife and chambermaid, who called him a meddling, unqualified puppy into affairs that belonged exclusively to women, with numerous reproachful and contemptuous epithets, which usually forced him to retreat to his own ground.

He grew thoughtful and absent-minded. The neighbors said he was thinking of his deceased wife, and the demon of remorse had gotten hold of him. He was actually seen to look at Mrs. Luther's grave and sigh. He had discovered the difference between a faithful, meek, uncomplaining companion, who gave herself soul and body a sacrifice to his selfishness, and one exactly the reverse. He began to experience the companionship of conscience, which ought to have been felt before; and if he saw his own character in but half of its moral deformity, he was certainly an unhappy man. His last illness and death were so sudden, that he died in death, had restless nights, and saw the pale, uncomplaining face of the first Mrs. Luther ever before him. He received no sympathy from friends—they knew the internal monitor was dealing justly with the man, and that no remorse was so acute for him who abuses the goodness and devotion of a long suffering, patient wife.





[Written for The Flag of our Union.]  
ON WITNESSING A MARRIAGE.

BY J. HENT, JR.

"Once two bright clouds," so Bradard said,  
Which lay each on the other's side,  
Were turned by impulse o'er his head,  
And meeting, mingled into one."

An emblem of the marriage tie;  
Is easily shadowed in this tale;  
At clouds to clouds the sense fly,  
Like clouds, at length, must they exhale.

Until the damp of death shall blight  
The forms of that united pair,  
May smiles of love prove  
And cheer life's faded vale of care.

May, too, each hour seem months of ease,  
And every month the joy of years;  
May no wild passion's chilling breeze  
Come then to morn the change in tears.

But, may their love be such as give  
To human hearts the calm of bliss;  
And point with shame, to those who live  
Unmated in a world like this.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]  
THE BIGOT'S REBUKE:

—O—

THE RIVAL CLERKS.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

MR. DAVID MASSINGER was quite a wealthy merchant in a large and thriving inland town. He was a man just turned upon the last half century of his life, and among those who knew him best, he had the reputation of being a very honest man in trade, but at the same time very close and exacting. Those who did not know him so well, were wont to say that he was not always honest. But David Massinger was honest, as the world goes; that is, he would never do an act of which the law could take cognizance. Beyond this, the least said about the merchant's honesty the better, for there were many people that had traded with him, who had sincerely believed that they had made the poorest end of the bargain, and some of them even asserted that David Massinger had used very unfair means in the transactions. And these men who had said this, were men of veracity—men whose words were "as good as sworn bonds" at any time—a circumstance which was very unfortunate for the merchant, seeing that he wished to retain the good opinion of all the citizens. But then Mr. Massinger was a church-member—a regular communicant, and a professor; and no man in the town made more show of his religion, or made louder and longer prayers. Every one knew how much religion he professed, for he made the matter very public.

Mr. Massinger employed two clerks in his store, and they were both of them about the same age. John Lowdon had been with the merchant the longest, having been a member of the family nearly ten years. He was a young man, now some three-and-twenty years of age, and he professed the same religion as did his master. In fact he belonged to the same church, and partook at the same communion table. He had taken great pains to copy after his employer, and thus he had been enabled to hide the real points of his character. If he had originally any bad traits, they might have possibly been eradicated under proper treatment, but in attempting to follow after the example of David Massinger, he had learned only to conceal and assume; so he talked as much religion as did his master, and could pray almost as fluent and as long.

The other clerk was one Henry Hooper, the child of a worthy mother, whose father had been dead many years. He was a very intelligent, active, enterprising young man, and Mr. Massinger kept him in his employ, at a fair salary, because people loved to trade with him, and because he was really a very trustworthy and faithful young man. Yet the merchant had never been able to see that young Hooper had any religion. He did see that the young clerk was kind, steady, industrious, and strictly moral, and every body seemed to love him, but he had not been able to detect any signs of what he thought to be religion.

David Massinger also had a daughter,—a bright-eyed, laughter-loving, joyous girl of nineteen. Her soul was big with all that is kind and good, and her heart was made for peace and love and good will. She was often in the store, and she often saw Henry Hooper both at the store and at her father's house. She often spoke with him. The first time she spoke with him alone, she trembled, and her eyes instinctively fell to the floor. The next time she met him in social converse, the color of her cheek was brightened, and her lips trembled while she spoke. After this, Adelia Massinger became acquainted with Henry's widowed mother, and she used to go there to her house to visit her, and often she would meet the son there.

Two such hearts could not long commune together without mingling into one. Those hearts did fall into the crucible of love, and they were melted together. The seal of affection was set; and the word was spoken. They not only loved but each to the other had confessed the love, and happiness came to bless them.

"Adelia," said the stern father, as he sat alone with his daughter one evening, "I have a question to ask you, and I wish that you should answer it truly. Do you love Henry Hooper?" The maiden was startled at first, not alone by the question, but mostly by the manner in which it was asked. But she answered distinctly in the affirmative.

"Has he ever spoken to you about his love?" continued the father, with a cloud upon his brow.

"Yes, father, he has."

"And what was your answer?"

"That I loved him in return, and most truly," unsubstantially replied the noble girl. The old man bent down his head, and laid his hands firmly upon his knees.

"Adelia," he at length said, "you have done

very wrong. I do not think that Henry Hooper can make you a proper husband.—Stop—you need not speak. I know what you would say. I had hoped that your choice would have fallen upon John Lowdon."

The fair girl shuddered as though she had seen a snake when she heard this, and without fear, she replied:

"Is it possible that you have allowed yourself to think that I could love John Lowdon?"

"And may I presume to ask why you should not love him?"

"Simply because there is nothing about him that is worthy of my love."

"What?" echoed the parent, in astonishment. "Nothing about him worthy of your love? Is he not one of the most active members of our church? and does he not maintain a religious character among all who know him?"

"That may all be, but where is his religion? Ah, father, I fear it is an outside show. In his heart he has none of it at all. He wears his profession about him as a cloak; and it serves to hide from the world a soul that is lone and loveless."

"Girl!"

"I speak the truth, father. Only last week a poor starving woman begged of John Lowdon a few pennies with which to buy bread. He knew that woman well. It was the miserable widow whose sick husband died a month since near the pond, and has since been sick herself. She begged of John Lowdon the means of sustaining life, and he repaid her with a sneer. Was that the part of a Christian? But the woman found succor. Her next supplication was to Henry Hooper. He gave her his arm for support, and conducted her to his own house, and there he fed and clothed her, and there she yet remains. O, God shall judge the heart, and his infinite eye shall see the hollowness of such professors. How shall they feel when they hear Christ Jesus say, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto me, ye have done it unto me, ye have done it unto me.'"

"Adelia, go to your room. I will speak again on this subject."

The maiden left the room, and the merchant was left alone. He had also repulsed the poor woman of whom his child had spoken. To him she had applied for succor, and he had turned her empty away. He knew that she was worthy and suffering, and yet out of his house he refused even the two mites that the poor widow gave. He could not but reflect upon the circumstance, and the more he reflected, the more uncomfortable he became, so he stopped thinking and took up his evening's newspaper, and commenced reading the report of the stock-market.

On the next morning Mr. Massinger called Henry Hooper into his counting-room.

"Henry," he said, with a very solemn look and tone, "I wish to ask you a few very important questions. In the first place I wish to know what is the state of your mind upon the subject of religion?"

The young man looked first surprised, and then pained, and a very close observer could have discovered a curl of just contempt about the corners of his mouth and upon his lips.

"Mr. Massinger," said Henry, somewhat proudly, but yet sincerely and respectfully, "my religion is not a thing to be talked about. It lies between myself and my God. If you have not seen it, then I can tell you nothing of it."

The merchant was considerably perplexed by this answer. It was a sort of new idea to him.

"Do you attend church, regularly?" he at length asked.

"Of course I do," Henry replied.

"And why?"

"Because I love to. Because I enjoy the religious exercises."

"What meeting do you attend, principally?"

"Always at Mr. B.'s."

"What? Do you believe in that doctrine?"

"I do."

"And do you consider yourself safe in such a course?"

"Safe from what?"

"The wrath of God."

"That, sir, is a subject upon which I never think. I simply obey God's laws as I understand them. I take Christ for my guide, and the nearer I can approach to the standard of life which my Saviour lived, the more joyous and happy I feel. I can only hope to love my God and my Saviour, to love my fellow-men, and to do unto others as I would that others should do unto me. The rest I leave with my God, sincerely trusting that he will not forsake me in my infirmity."

"Henry Hooper," resumed the merchant, after some moments of conflicting thought, "you have made an avowal of love to my daughter."

"Yes, sir, I have," the youth returned, with considerable emotion.

"Then let me tell you what I will do. The girl loves you, and I will not see her unhappy. Join my church and attend meeting with me, and she shall be yours. You may think of this, and give me an answer at your leisure."

"I shall need no time, sir, to entertain such a proposition," quickly answered Henry, with a flushed cheek, and a burning eye. "I cannot listen to such a thought for a moment."

"Then you refuse?"

"Yes, sir. I do refuse to sell my soul for any bawler. My religion, sir, is my highest source of earthly joy, and if ever I take to my bosom a wife, the presence and operation of that religion shall be the very anchor of my domestic joy. No sir. Were I to sell my religion for a wife, then I should have no soul worth a wife's possessing."

"Very well," uttered the merchant, with an ineffectual attempt to appear calm. "You have given me your answer, and now you shall have mine. Adelia Massinger shall not be your wife. Remember that, and govern yourself accordingly. That will do, sir. You can go about your work."

Henry left the counting-room with a bowed head and a trembling lip. But he remembered Adelia's love, and he remembered, too, how

nearly the religion of her soul agreed with his own. She was of age, and free to do her own will, and in his soul he knew that even her father had no earthly right to blight or crush her hopes and joys forever.

"Adelia, Henry Hooper can never be your husband."

The maiden looked up into her father's face, and an ashy pallor overspread her features. But the color soon came again, and in a trembling tone she asked:

"Why not, father?"

"No matter why. It is my will."

"But I have a right to know the reason for your decision."

"I have reason enough. A child of mine shall not marry with an infidel!"

"An infidel? What do you mean?" exclaimed the girl, perfectly astounded. "Henry Hooper is not an infidel."

"He is just the same to me. He has no fear of God's power at all."

"Perhaps you misunderstand him," returned Adelia, feeling strong in the work of defending her lover. "He does not stand in any dread of God, and why should he? He does what he believes to be right. He obeys God's laws, and he finds them pleasant and easy. He loves his God instead of dreading him."

"Girl, beware! Look out that you do not break my heart by losing your own soul upon the same subtle quicksand of infidelity."

"I will answer for my soul, and as far as your heart is concerned—if you can then calmly consider me a leading infidel, I do not think it will easily break. I love Henry with my whole soul."

"But he shall not be your husband, nevertheless. I am determined—"

"Stop," interrupted the fair girl, with a quick, decided manner. "Do not say too much, for I shall choose peace rather than misery, and if I cannot find it beneath your father, I shall—"

She hesitated in her speech, for she remembered that she was speaking to her parent. She had been urged on by her warm love and impulsive instinct to resist wrong; but she would not willingly say too much to her father.

"Go on," said the merchant, with a look and tone of contempt.

"No, father, I will say no more. But I hope you will not blast my every hope of happiness here on earth."

As she spoke this, she bowed her head and burst into tears. Her parent chose to say no more at that time, and the subject was dropped.

Adelia knew that it was the settled plan of her father that she should marry with John Lowdon, but she had made up her mind that she would never do such a thing. Further than this she wanted time to reflect.

One morning about a week subsequent to the interviews just recorded, Mr. Massinger discovered that he had been robbed of five hundred dollars. He hastened to his ledger and found that all was right there, but yet the money was gone from the safe. He called John Lowdon one side, and told him of the circumstance. The confidential clerk was astounded, or, at least, he pretended to be, and he wondered how such a sum could have been taken without detection, as the safe was beneath the desk in the counting-room, and always kept locked save when something was to be taken out or returned by those who had right access to it.

"But it may have been taken by some one who has legal access to it," suggested the merchant.

Lowdon gazed down upon the floor for a moment, and then he said, while a peculiar expression appeared in his eye:

"So do I think it was. You must not think hard of me, sir, if I speak my mind freely."

"Please let me hear you," said Mr. Massinger, his countenance brightening, as he spoke.

"Not now," resumed the clerk, after he had apparently reflected for a moment. "I will not speak my suspicions at present, but we will wait. I may gain some further light."

"But have you grounds for any suspicions?"

"O yes, the best of grounds."

"Then let me hear what they are."

"Not now," he would rather wait."

"But it is my command that you speak now."

"Then I cannot refuse, sir, though it will pain me to speak what I fear is the truth. Ah, my good master, I would rather hush this matter up—only justice demands that the truth should be known. I fear that Henry Hooper is the guilty person."

"Just my mind, exactly," uttered the merchant, with a sort of exultant look. "But now what grounds have you?"

"I have seen Henry have large sums of money lately."

"But this must have been all taken within a very few days."

"Yes, but listen. Night before last I saw Henry enter the drinking and gambling saloon at the lower end of the street, and I was told by one in whose veracity I have the fullest confidence that he was up in the secret chamber at the gaming table."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the merchant, in pure astonishment; for with all his fears respecting the young man, he was not prepared for this.

"It is not only possible, sir, but it is true. I knew Henry was at the gaming-table night before last, and he was there very late, too. And I can tell you more. He was seen staggering through the streets with a drunken companion."

"This you are sure is true, John?"

"I can prove it, sir. Though I should trust that my word would be sufficient. I had meant never to have revealed this, and I should not have done so but for present circumstances."

"Of course you will doubt me, John. Only the news was so astounding. But I might have expected it. Keep this to yourself for the present. We will watch him and see that he does not spend the money."

"If he has not already gambled it away," suggested Lowdon.

"I will go at once and see the keeper of this saloon," said Massinger, with a groan; for the idea of losing his money came more heavily upon him than did the thought of Henry's sin.

"O that would be of no use," quickly returned Lowdon,—"no use in the world, for the gamblers are under the most solemn oaths to keep each other's secrets. You could gain nothing from them, but they would rather deny the whole."

"Very well," resumed the merchant, after a thoughtful pause. "Then let us watch him narrowly, and something may turn up to convict him. Keep your eye upon him, and mark all his movements; and watch him too as he goes to dinner; and this afternoon we will send an officer to search his trunk at his dwelling."

At that moment there was a quick movement just outside the door of the counting-room. Mr. Massinger heard it, and he opened the door and looked out. His daughter stood at some distance looking at some silks which lay upon the counter.

"Adelia, where have you been?" he sternly asked.

"Down to Mrs. Russell's to see about my new dress, and I want some more trimming for it," she replied.

"Have you heard what we have been talking about?"

"Who?"

"John and myself."

"I have just come here, sir."

"Very well—wait a moment, and I will get what you want."

Adelia had just come there, but still she deceived her father, for she had in reality heard nearly all that they had said.

Mr. Massinger and John went about their business as though nothing had happened, save that they both watched the movements of Henry Hooper with more than common interest—the former regarding him eagerly and suspiciously, while the latter looked at him sulkily, and seemed nervous and uneasy. Once or twice Henry noticed the look of his employer, but he gave it to another cause. He noticed also the furtive glances of Lowdon, and these, he thought, were the result of jealousy. He little dreamed of the plot that was being hatched up against him.

At an early hour that evening, Mr. Massinger went to the house of a justice to have a warrant issued for the apprehension of Henry Hooper, but the justice was not at home, and he called on the constable, whom he found readily. The constable promised that he would see the whole business attended to that night, and with this assurance the merchant went home. He at first intended to speak to his daughter on the subject of Hooper's crime, but after some reflection, he concluded to wait until the business was all settled.

The evening was pretty well advanced. Mr. Massinger was sitting at his table trying to read, Adelia was upon the sofa pretending to be working a bead purse, but a mere casual observer could have seen that she took no stitches,—her hand trembled too much for that. John Lowdon sat opposite to his employer, and was looking at the pictures in a new book.

Just as the clock struck nine, the door-bell rang, and Adelia started to answer the call. She hastened to the door, and when she returned she was followed by two men.

"Ah, Mr. Sanderson," uttered the merchant, starting to his feet, "you have done the business, then?"

"You see I have brought the youth of whom you speak," returned Mr. Sanderson, who was the constable upon whom Massinger had called.

"Yes, Mr. Massinger," added Henry Hooper, stepping quickly forward, his face flushed, and his eyes sparkling. "I have come. I have just learned, sir, what a crime you have tried to fasten upon me. O God, forgive you for the injustice. I did not dream that you would thus try to ruin me."

"I would not ruin you, Henry," replied Massinger, considerably moved by the touching tone and manner of the youth. "If there is any rain, it is you who have ruined yourself. I have been robbed of five hundred dollars, and there are circumstances connected with your recent course which are very suspicious, to say the least. I do really hope you may make them all appear right."

Now Mr. Massinger had some power of reading character from the human countenance, and he could not but own to himself that Henry's face was by no means an index to anything bad. His sympathy, too, had become most strangely moved in the young man's favor within the last two minutes. The very first glance of Henry's eyes, overflowing as they were with imploring and forgiveness, sent a thrill to his soul, and on the instant the hope came to him that the guilt might not rest where he had feared.

"Stop a moment," said the constable. "Miss Massinger knows the most about this affair, and to save time and words, I hope she will explain it as she understands it."

"What! Adelia? You know about this?" uttered the merchant.

"Yes, father," said the maiden, trembling.

"But what? How?"

"I will tell you," replied the girl, gaining confidence. "I did hear all that was said in the counting-room this morning, and I understood it all then, but I could not explain at that time. Mr. Lowdon told you that Henry Hooper had had considerable money lately. So he has, sir. You pay him again, and he wastes none of it. He also told you that Henry was in the gaming saloon, at the gaming table, and that late at night he was seen staggering home with a drunken companion."

"I did say so," stammered John Lowdon, who had turned very pale, "and I can prove it all, too."

Upon the face of Henry Hooper there was a look of pity and contempt. He would have spoken, but Adelia interrupted him.

"Ay," she continued, shaking her small white finger at John Lowdon, "you can prove it; but that is not all you can prove. You can prove that he went there to get away one of his poor schoolmates from that sink of iniquity. A poor

youth, the only child of a widowed mother—had fallen into the path of evil, and Henry would save him. For that purpose he went to the gaming house. He found that the misguided man had gone to the hazard table, and thither he went after him, and after much persuasion he drew him away. The poor fellow was much intoxicated, but yet Henry took him by the arm and led him home. All this I saw on the very next morning after it happened, and I had it from the lips of the widowed mother of the sinful youth. And you know it, too, O John Lowdon, where do you expect forgiveness for such heartless sins?"

"I did not know all you have spoken," said Lowdon, trembling more and more.

"You knew enough, at all events, to know that you were speaking the basest falsehood. You knew why Henry went to the gaming house, for Lyman Butler told you."

The false, base clerk would have stammered out some reply, but before he could do so, Mr. Massinger spoke to his suspected clerk.

"Henry," he said, "I am going to ask you a question, and I shall now believe you will answer me truly. Do not be offended. Did you take any of the money which I have lost?"

"Mr. Massinger, I did not," was the young man's simple, honest reply.

"Have you any idea of where it went to?"

"That is a question I would rather be excused from answering, now," replied Henry, promptly, but yet modestly.

"Very well—but you will answer at some time?"

"I will."

"Then, Mr. Sanderson," resumed the merchant, turning towards the officer, "I withdraw my complaint, and you may at once set Mr. Hooper at liberty."

"O, sir," returned the constable with a smile, "he is perfectly free now. I have had no writ yet for him."

"Then how comes this?" asked Massinger, in surprise.

"I came here for another purpose," said Sanderson. "Your money, sir, is safe."

"Safe?" uttered the merchant, springing to his feet.

"Safe!" gasped John Lowdon, turning deadly pale, and sinking back into his chair.

"Yes, and even here, your own daughter can make good her word."

Massinger sat down again, and gazed inquiringly upon Adelia, and after some hesitation, she said:

"Yes, father. I have helped to find your money, and I will tell you how."

At this moment, John Lowdon arose from his chair and approached the door.

"Stop, stop, my young friend," said the officer, moving quickly towards him.

"But I am not well. I will return in a few moments," whispered the trembling man.

"O, stop and hear Miss Massinger's story, and then, perhaps, you can have company. Sit down again, sir."

Lowdon sat down, and Adelia continued:

"A few evenings since I was in at the house of Mrs. Jervis, who, you know, was married only a few months since. She told me that her husband was going to make a venture—he was going to send out part of a cargo of goods to California; and she also told me that John Lowdon was going in with him. After this she remembered that her husband had told her not to speak of Lowdon's connection with him in the business, as Lowdon was very anxious that the matter should be kept secret. I promised her that I would say nothing about it, unless there should be something wrong in it. I knew that John had no money to place in such a venture, and when I learned that you had lost five hundred dollars, I at once suspected the truth. When I found that you talked of having Henry's house searched, I went at once to Mr. Sanderson, and told him the whole story. He can tell you the rest."

"Yes, sir, and in a very few words," said the constable, as he saw that Mr. Massinger had looked towards him. "I went at once to Mr. Jervis and told him the story, and also that Lowdon was trying to fasten the crime upon Henry Hooper. He then confessed to me that John Lowdon gave him five hundred dollars last night, and he handed me the money just as he received it. You can examine him, sir, and see if you recognize any of it."

As Sanderson spoke, he drew a roll of bills from his pocket and handed them to the merchant. The latter examined them all, and then, with a painful expression of countenance, he said:

"These are mine—every one of them—the very ones I lost."

"Then you know the thief."

"Only the old merchant made no reply. He only looked at John Lowdon, and then he bowed his head. It was not pure grief that moved him. He was pained and mortified, and in his own soul he felt humbled. When he did speak, it was to his hidden clerk:

"Henry," he said, extending his hand, "forgive me for the injustice I have done you. We will speak of this again."

"Now," said Sanderson, arising and putting on his hat, and turning towards Lowdon, "you may go out."

"O save me, save me!" gasped the base coward, cowering from the officer and trembling like an aspen.

"You must go with me now," resumed the officer, "for I have a warrant, and I must serve it. There is no use of begging, for it won't do any good. Come."

So John Lowdon was led from the room, and after he was gone, Adelia fell upon her father's neck and wept, for the excitement had been too much for her.

That night Mr. Massinger had plenty to think of, and long after he had closed his eyes he did the weak and ponder upon what had passed. He began to see the mere profession of religion in a new light, for the facts of every day life which had so long escaped his notice were now brought directly home to him, and were forced upon his





